

IN THE CRIMINAL COURT  
OF MADISON COUNTY, TENNESSEE  
AT JACKSON, DIVISION I

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STATE OF TENNESSEE

VS.

No. 96-589

JON DOUGLAS HALL

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STATE'S OPENING STATEMENT

FEBRUARY 3, 1997

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AMY MAYS

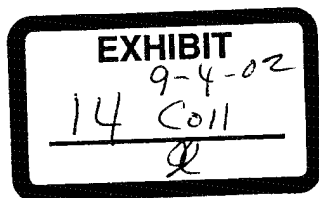
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

MADISON COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMPLEX

JACKSON, TENNESSEE 38301

(731) 423-6039

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ORIGINAL

APPEARANCES

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Before the Honorable:

WHIT LAFON, Judge

For the State:

MR. JERRY WOODALL

MR. AL EARLS

District Attorney General's Office  
Lowell Thomas State Office Building  
Jackson, Tennessee 38301

For the Defendant:

MR. JESSE HILL FORD, III

MR. CLAYTON F. MAYO

Ford & Mayo  
618 North Highland  
Jackson, Tennessee 38301

\* \* \* \* \*

1 MR. WOODALL: Ladies and  
2 gentlemen, we now begin the process in  
3 this trial, as you know from serving on  
4 juries before, where the State's  
5 entitled to make an opening statement.  
6 The Defendant will then have the  
7 opportunity to speak. And an opening  
8 statement is designed to allow the  
9 parties to show you, or point out to  
10 you, what they intend to prove. I like  
11 to think an opening statement is kind of  
12 like a road map. You take out your map,  
13 and you know which road you're going to  
14 follow and what little towns you're  
15 going to go through when you go, say,  
16 from Jackson to Newbern, because that's  
17 not a place that you often probably go,  
18 so you know which little city you'll go  
19 through, which road you'll take in your  
20 destination to Newbern. And that's what  
21 these opening remarks are about.

22 As the State of Tennessee has  
23 already read to you, as alleged in the  
24 indictment, the State of Tennessee is

1 going to show, based upon the proof  
2 presented in this case, and the evidence  
3 that's presented, and the testimony  
4 that's presented, that this Defendant on  
5 the date and time alleged in the  
6 indictment did, in fact, deliberately  
7 and premeditatedly and with malice  
8 aforethought kill and murder his  
9 estranged wife, that occurring on or  
10 about the 29th day of July, 1994.

11 Now, one thing that I think you  
12 need to know, as you look at this case  
13 and as you listen to the proof is, you  
14 need to remember one thing. Now  
15 premeditation means that the intent to  
16 kill must have been formed prior to the  
17 act itself. It is not necessary that  
18 the purpose to kill pre-exist in the  
19 mind of the accused for any definite  
20 period of time. You got that? And I  
21 feel like at the appropriate time the  
22 Court will instruct you that, and that's  
23 important because the State is going to  
24 produce three eyewitnesses that will

1 tell you what happened that night, three  
2 little girls of Billie Hall. And based  
3 upon what they heard, based upon what  
4 they observed and based upon what you  
5 will be told, the Defendant acted  
6 deliberately, of cool purpose and with  
7 premeditation. Their testimony will  
8 tell you that there are at least three  
9 separate acts of violent repeated  
10 assault by the Defendant upon the person  
11 of his estranged wife.

12           The proof will show that the  
13 Defendant came out to the house that  
14 night, number one, uninvited, and number  
15 two, prior to gaining entry into the  
16 house, that he went to the telephone  
17 junction box and unplugged the telephone  
18 so the telephone could not be used. It  
19 will show that he was not invited into  
20 the house but pushed his way into the  
21 house.

22           The proof will then show that  
23 the Defendant required the little girls  
24 to go to bed, at which time he placed

1 objects of furniture behind the bedroom  
2 door when at the time that they were  
3 living together, the bedroom that was  
4 shared by he and his estranged wife, in  
5 order to prevent someone from coming in,  
6 or make it difficult for them to get in.

7           The proof will then show that  
8 the Defendant commenced to strike and  
9 beat Billie Jo Hall, that the little  
10 girls came to the rescue of their mother  
11 and attempted to get the Defendant off  
12 their mother and to stop beating their  
13 mother, and the proof will show that he  
14 then told these little girls, "If you  
15 try to use the telephone or you go for  
16 help, I'm going to kill your mother."

17           The proof will show that the  
18 little girls tried to prevent him from  
19 attacking their mother, that their  
20 mother was able to get away from the  
21 Defendant and leave the bedroom and get  
22 out the front door of the house and into  
23 the front yard.

24           The proof will show that the

1 Defendant then pursued the mother,  
2 knocked her down on the pavement,  
3 inflicted more repeated violent blows to  
4 her person; that she got away again and  
5 went and sat down on some landscape ties  
6 and tried to catch her breath.

7           The proof will then show the  
8 Defendant went to her again, struck her  
9 again, continued to strike her, drug her  
10 to the children's above-ground swimming  
11 pool, which is about two and a half or  
12 three feet deep, and throws Billie Jo  
13 Hall in the swimming pool.

14           The proof will then show based  
15 upon the medical testimony of Dr. O. C.  
16 Smith that not only did the victim  
17 suffer multi repeat blows showing  
18 premeditation, but the woman was  
19 strangled, and she also sucked water  
20 into her lungs as she lay face down in  
21 that pool, and that, too, contributed to  
22 her death.

23           In addition to that, the State  
24 of Tennessee will demonstrate to you

1 that the Defendant has made statements  
2 to other individuals which demonstrates  
3 his deliberation, his premeditation.

4 We have traveled from Jackson to  
5 Newbern in a rapid period of time.  
6 Tomorrow we'll make the same journey but  
7 more slowly, and we'll discuss the  
8 geography and the buildings that we see  
9 on the road there.

10 Thank you.

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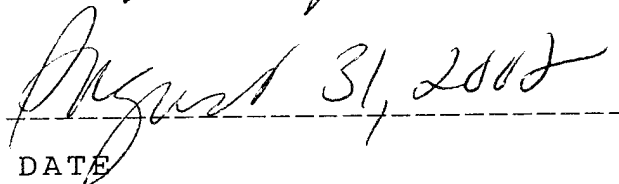
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CERTIFICATE

I, the undersigned Amy Mays,  
Official Court Reporter for the 26th  
Judicial District of the State of  
Tennessee, do hereby certify that the  
foregoing is a true, accurate and  
complete transcript, to the best of my  
knowledge and ability, of the requested  
proceedings had in the captioned cause,  
in the Criminal Court for Madison  
County, Tennessee, on the 3rd day of  
February, 1997.

I do further certify that I am  
neither of kin, counsel nor interest to  
any party hereto.

  
AMY MAYS

  
DATE